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First Firefighters Graduate Redesigned Recruit Program
Class Size Increased Without Compromising Quality

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan and newly appointed Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Director John Nadeau are pleased to announce the graduation of the 166th Class of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's fifty-five day Recruit Firefighting Program on February 11, 2005. This is the first class to graduate from the newly restructured program that accommodates 72 students, up from a previous maximum of 44. State Fire Marshal Coan said, "The new structure divides the class into smaller groups that allows instructors to maximize the facility resources and support staff, while not sacrificing the ability to provide close supervision, individual instruction, and foster the development of teamwork."

Academy Director Nadeau said, "This change is designed to decrease the backlog and the wait that departments currently experience in having firefighters admitted to the Recruit Program." This rigorous professional training provides our newest firefighters with the basic skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely. The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, a division of the Department of Fire Services, offers this program, tuition-free.

68 Graduates

The sixty-eight graduates, three women and sixty-five men, represent the fire departments of: Abington, Acton, Ashland, Attleboro, Braintree, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Falmouth, Hingham, Holden, Kingston, Leominster, Longmeadow, Lowell, Manchester, Medford,

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Middleborough, Nantucket, Natick, North Andover, Randolph, Revere, Saugus, Seekonk, Sharon, Shrewsbury, Stow, Sudbury, Taunton, Tewksbury, Waltham, Westfield, Westminster, and Woburn.

Today's Fire Department Does Much More than Fight Fires

Today's firefighters do far more than fight fires. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies ranging from the suspected presence of carbon monoxide to a gas leak. They may be called to rescue a child who has fallen through the ice or who has locked himself in a bathroom. They rescue people from stalled elevators and those who are trapped in vehicle accidents. They test and maintain their equipment, ranging from self-contained breathing apparatus to hydrants to hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy they learn all these skills and more from certified fire instructors who are also experienced firefighters. Students learn all the basic skills they need to respond to fires and to contain and control them. They are also given training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, water rescue procedures, confined space rescue techniques, and rappelling. The intensive, eleven-week program for municipal firefighters involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training and live firefighting practice.

Basic Firefighter Skills

Students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Recruit Program all students have met national standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001 and are certified to the level of Firefighter I and II by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.